

Worcestershire Local Nature Partnership

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Worcestershire Local Nature Partnership

Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

- 1.1 These Terms of Reference (ToR) set out how the Worcestershire Local Nature Partnership (WLNP) is constituted and how it operates. The ToR have been endorsed by the WLNP Board following consultation with the full WLNP membership, and any revisions to them will be made by the same process.

2. Purpose of the WLNP

- 2.1 The WLNP brings together a broad range of local organisations, businesses and people, acting at a strategic 'landscape' scale, to deliver improvements in Worcestershire's environment.
- 2.2 The WLNP works in partnership with other strategic groups including the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership. Specific partnership working arrangements with other organisations are set out in individual agreements.

3. Definition of 'natural environment'

- 3.1 The WLNP acts for the environment in its widest sense, including (but not limited to) biodiversity, geodiversity, landscape, historic environment, flooding, climate change, and green space. The WLNP supports a green infrastructure approach to multifunctional environmental benefits.

4. Geographical Scope

- 4.1 WLNP covers the administrative county of Worcestershire, but recognises the importance of cross-boundary resources and challenges.

5. Structure

- 5.1 The WLNP Chair is the partnership's figurehead. The Board provides strategic oversight and decision-making for the WLNP. The Board is informed by a wider Reference Group, specific standing Task Groups, and, if required, Task-and-Finish groups.

6. The Chair

- 6.1 The Chair is elected by the full WLNP Reference Group every three years. There is no limit on consecutive terms.
- 6.2 The Chair must operate in the best interests of Worcestershire's environment.
- 6.3 The Chair's role is to lead meetings of the WLNP's Board and Reference Group and to be the primary champion of the WLNP. The Chair will maintain strong relationships with other senior leaders from across the county and beyond, will represent the WLNP at other relevant meetings. If, in exceptional circumstances, the Chair is unable to fulfil any of these roles, the Vice Chair will carry them out.

7. The Board

- 7.1 The WLNP Board comprises four senior managerial/director-level representatives (one each from the DEFRA family, local government, the voluntary sector, and the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership). The Board will include the WLNP Chair and Vice-Chair.
- 7.2 Board members are agreed by the Reference Group to sit for three year periods. There is no limit on consecutive terms.
- 7.3 The role of the Board is to make decisions on behalf of the full WLNP, to engage with other partnerships and organisations, and to prepare and agree revisions to the WLNP's Business Plan.
- 7.4 No formal calendar of Board meetings will be set. The Board will meet as and when necessary, including by virtual meeting or teleconference, to address specific items of business. Records of meetings will be kept.

8. The Reference Group

- 8.1 The Reference Group is intended to be open and inclusive to encourage a broad field of expertise and experience across all aspects of Worcestershire's environment. Representatives from the public, private, voluntary and charitable sectors are encouraged. Membership is at the discretion of the Chair. A list of members is available on the WLNP web pages.
- 8.2 The role of the Reference Group is to:
- contribute to delivering the WLNP's priorities and work programme;
 - share information and best practice;
 - scrutinise proposals and advise the Board in its decision-making; and
 - build relationships between the WLNP and other organisations.
- 8.3 Reference Group members are required to:
- actively promote the WLNP's priorities and ways of working;
 - distribute relevant information between the WLNP and their networks;
 - contribute in-kind resources to facilitate the operation of the WLNP;
 - attend quarterly WLNP meetings (providing a substitute if they cannot);
 - deliver presentations, briefings, or tours as requested by the Chair.

9. Standing Task Groups

- 9.1 LNP Task Groups bring together experts in specific topics to take forward positive action within the LNPs overarching priorities, objectives, and areas of focus.
- 9.2 Task Groups are ultimately accountable to the LNP, but day-to-day operating methods are governed by each Task Group's respective Terms of Reference (where they exist).
- 9.3 Task Groups provide updates (either verbal or written) at each LNP meeting.
- 9.3 Current LNP Task Groups:
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| - Climate Change | - State of the Environment |
| - Biodiversity/Green Infrastructure | - Water |
| - Parks and Countryside | |
- 9.4 Any new Task Group must be approved by the full LNP reference group.

10. Task and Finish Groups

- 10.1 Drawn primarily from Reference Group members, these groups will convene at the request of the Board. They will bring experts together in order to support the development and delivery of LNP priorities.

11. Secretariat

- 11.1 The WLNP secretariat will arrange WLNP meetings, distribute information, and host and maintain the WLNP's internet pages.
- 11.2 Until further notice, the WLNP secretariat function will be provided on a no-cost basis by Worcestershire County Council.

12. Decision making

- 12.1 The Board is responsible for formal decision-making, for which a minimum of three Board Members are required. Board decisions need not be unanimous. If consensus cannot be reached, the Chair will make the final decision.

13. WLNP meetings

- 13.1 "WLNP meetings" are quarterly meetings of the wider Reference Group. The quorum for WLNP meetings is 5 members. Guest attendees are welcomed at the Chair's discretion.
- 13.2 Proposals for agenda items must be provided to the WLNP secretariat at least three weeks before the meeting. Their inclusion is at the Chair's discretion. Items not on the agenda may only be allowed at the chair's discretion.
- 13.3 Meeting papers will be circulated electronically by the secretariat at least one week before the meeting.
- 13.4 Where members miss two consecutive WLNP meetings the Chair may request their sector to nominate a new member.
- 13.5 If a decision is required at a WLNP meeting, this is made by simple majority vote. The Chair has a casting vote if agreement cannot be reached.

14. Reporting mechanisms

- 14.1 The WLNP operates independently and does not report to any specific body. It does, however, provide updates to DEFRA as and when required, and WLNP members provide updates to and from their respective organisations.

15. Reviewing these Terms of Reference

- 15.1 These Terms of Reference will be reviewed every two years and approved by the WLNP Board following consultation with the WLNP Reference Group.